

14 November 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR: The CIA Career Council

SUBJECT: Foreign Language Development Program

1. The drafting committee for the Foreign Language Development Program met on 10 November 1956, from 1100 - 1350 hours to consider DD/P recommendations for modifications in the staff study dated 21 January 1956. All members of the committee attended.

2. Following agreement on identification of the issues, as set forth in the Director of Training's memorandum of ~~7~~⁵ November 1956 to the Career Council, the Committee reached full accord on seven of eight items discussed and agreed on the desirability of consideration by the Career Council of three alternative positions on one issue. ~~A summary of discussions and conclusions is attached hereto.~~

3. With regard to the items agreed to by the Committee, it is recommended that the CIA Career Council favorably consider these modifications to the staff study:

a. Eligibility for awards shall not be conditioned by membership in the Career Staff.

b. The Language Specialists Program should be deleted from the current program and should be treated separately.

c. In identifying the language requirements of specific positions, each Deputy Director will be permitted flexibility and individual discretion, identifying those positions wherein language competence is an essential characteristic of the position and directing possession and acquisition of language competence for such additional assignments as is consistent with operational needs and plans.

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4. The issue unresolved by the Committee had to do with policy regarding eligibility for awards for proficiency acquired during duty time. It is recommended that the CIA Career Council select the most suitable of these three alternatives recognized by the Committee:

a. Eligibility for awards shall not be affected by the fact that an individual receives instruction by command during duty time. This is in recognition of the fact that most persons receiving language instruction on duty time must additionally invest a/ ^{considerable} amount of personal time equal to from one-third to two-thirds the amount of duty time training. (This is the present provision of the staff study.)

b. Eligibility for an award/ requires certification from the trainee that he has achieved a particular level of proficiency by contributing of his own time an equal or greater proportion than duty time contributed by the Agency. This is in recognition of the belief that it is not proper to award people for performance in command training, and/ ^{further} that the system of awards should be directed primarily at encouraging part-time and voluntary ~~study~~ study with more awardable levels of performance and relatively higher awards. (This is the alternative proposed by the DD/P *and discussed in*

Attachment A
c. All persons may qualify for awards, but a distinction in amounts shall apply between training received on duty time and on personal time.

5. It was further recommended that the Council appoint, or recommend that the Director of Training appoint a permanent committee to review operation of the program; and to recommend modifications as desirable, and that the Deputy Director (Support) issue a notice immediately implementing creation

of the Foreign Language Roster in recognition of the facts that (a) the Office of Personnel already has initiated steps permitting the first phase development of the Roster by distribution of a form that requires a detailed self-evaluation of language competence to be validated later by objective tests, and (b) the Office of Training is developing as rapidly as possible a proficiency testing program.

6. Preliminary discussion of issues set forth in the DTR's memorandum in paras. 3.a.(3), and 3.b.(2) and (3) brought to light information that caused the DD/P member of the Committee to withdraw them as issues, and consequently no further ~~the~~ decision was necessary.

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Chief, Language Area School, OTR

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Attachment, DD/P Position Report
Chairman
Ad Hoc Committee
Foreign Language Development Program

The members of the Ad Hoc Committee have concurred in the report.

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DD/P POSITION REGARDING AWARDS
FOR COMMAND LANGUAGE TRAINING

1. DD/P agrees that the best hope for the creation of an improved language potential in the Agency lies in full-time language training. The greatest obstacle to full-time language training, here and overseas, is the current workload. No special incentives are needed to bring it about if relief is obtained by exempting trainees from T/O and ceiling limitations as recommended by the Committee. However, the size of the program is bound to be limited; and our most important remaining problem is the encouragement of part-time training, coupled, to be effective, with voluntary training on the student's own time.

2. We believe that, in time, CS personnel ^{*if they do not now,*} must come to regard knowledge of foreign languages as a tool of their trade, as much as a typewriter, or a decent I. Q. The philosophy of attaching a special reward to such knowledge is inconsistent with this concept, except where an extraordinary voluntary effort is involved. Hence, we believe that it is neither proper, necessary to achieve our goal, nor desirable, to give a special reward to a person assigned to language training on Agency time. It could be argued by the same logic that we should pay an award to personnel who take courses [REDACTED]

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3. On the other hand, a man who holds down his job, takes off an hour or two a day ^{*- or more -*} during office hours to go to a language lab, and then spends his evenings to give him a grasp of a foreign language, deserves to be encouraged.

4. It is granted that the level of achievement in part-time and voluntary study cannot be expected to be the same as that in full-time study. Therefore, awards should be given not only for levels of proficiency described in earlier

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staff papers, but for lower levels as well. Granting that only a high level of proficiency will enable a man to do a good intelligence job overseas or here, every little bit helps. Even a smattering in a foreign language enables a man to find his way to the railway station, to ask questions regarding the location of the Prime Minister's office, to read a headline, to get the sense of a broadcast, and basically to gain enough entre into the language to become interested in further developing his proficiency. We need these skills on every level, and we need to encourage people to obtain them, even far short of perfection.

5. Giving out awards for proficiency no matter how achieved is a one-way affair. It is not possible to announce awards for proficiency on the basis of full-time command study, and then later to cancel such a procedure without an adverse effect on the program. It is, to the contrary, possible to start the program in line with the recommendations in this paper, and to determine later whether the program would, indeed, benefit from awards for full-time command training, and then to institute them.

6. Assuming that there is a limit on the amount of funds the Agency is willing to invest in awards for language proficiency, we believe the Agency's language potential would benefit very considerably from a concentration of the money available on higher awards for part-time and voluntary study, than on relatively lower awards across the board.

7. Consequently, we propose the formula that eligibility for an award requires certification from the trainee that he has achieved a particular level of proficiency by contributing of his own time an equal or greater proportion than duty-hour time contributed by the Agency.

8. We asked several of our colleagues whether, after taking full-time

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command training in a foreign language, they would consider themselves eligible to receive a special award. The unanimous answer was no.

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